

ANIMALS - DOGS

Duxbury Clipper

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Pooper Scooper Bylaw Proposed

A new law aimed at making dog owners pick up after their pets will be put to voters at the annual town meeting on Saturday, March 9.

Wil Sheehan of Washington St. has submitted a citizen's petition warrant article that proposes dog owners take responsibility for removing and disposing of dog feces on "any street, walkway, public place, or private property of another." Violators of this bylaw shall be subject to a warning for the first offense and then fines for further offenses. The fines begin at \$25 for the second "verified offense" then jump to \$50 for all subsequent violations.

"The purpose of this bylaw is to cause people to take responsibility for their dogs," Sheehan told selectmen at their Monday night meeting. "The Duxbury population has grown

considerably and unfortunately not all dog owners are responsible."

Sheehan said public areas where people walk their dogs such as Bay Farm and the Powder Point Bridge are littered with "dog droppings."

"It's a disaster at Bay Farm. There are dog droppings all over the place on the path," said Sheehan. "If you walk across the Bridge, it's disgusting."

He also cited the grassy path along Washington St. as a prime place to find dog poop in public.

Sheehan said dog feces in public is more than a nuisance. It is also a public health hazard and poses a safety problem because it can be very slippery and

cause people to fall.

Sheehan said he copied the bylaw from Lexington. Before it went into effect there, police had worried its passage would turn them into the "pooper patrol" but found that was not the case, he said.

"The towns that have this type of bylaw find it's not an enforcement issue," said Sheehan. "The mere passage of the bylaw enforces it in the minds of people."

Selectmen Margaret Kearney and John Tuffy agreed that dog poop at Bay Farm was a problem.

"At Bay Farm I walk with rubber boots on," said Tuffy. "It's just a mess."